


1999

Town of Georgetown

UMass Amherst Center Economic Development

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GEORGETOWN

The Town of **G**eorgetown features small town rural living in an area of great natural beauty. And while it is still widely forested, with many acres of open and recreation land, the town also has a walkable village core as well as industrial and commercial development. Georgetown is renown for its thriving antique industry and also boasts an organ manufacturing company, a supermarket and an expanding public golf and country club. Retaining it's rural character is an important objective for the residents and municipal leaders alike and this has lead to recent open space acquisitions, the hiring of the town's first town planner and work on a town Master Plan. With a clear vision of their future, Georgetown is taking the steps it needs to meet its objectives of guiding growth to maintain economic vitality and community character.

Community Assets

1. The Town's rural character is seen as a principal asset. (Colwell)
2. The availability of an excellent transportation system allows residents to easily commute to the greater Boston area. (Colwell)
3. The large number of working farms in Georgetown are a unique resource that adds considerably to the community's rural character. (Colwell)
4. Camp Dennison a recently acquired Town property is a valuable community asset. (Colwell)
5. The community beach is a well utilized recreational area. (Colwell)
6. The growing awareness of planning issues is helping to intelligently guide new growth. (Brown)
7. Large tracts of forested land provide neighborhood buffers, wildlife habitat, and many recreational opportunities. (Brown)
8. A compact downtown provides many opportunities for infill development that will strengthen the village center and give the town a unique identity. (Brown)

General

Established:	1838
Type of Community:	Residential Suburb (DOR), Rural Community (MVPC)
Total Land Area:	12.94 square miles (DHCD)
Location:	28 miles north of Boston, 250 miles from New York City (DHCD)
Population per Square Mile:	538 (1996 DOR)
Population:	1980 – 5,687 persons (1980 US Census) 1990 – 6,384 persons (1990 US Census)
Population Projections:	2000 – 7,082 persons (M.I.S.E.R.)
Form of Government:	Selectmen

Administrative Assistant
Open Town Meeting

Economic Data

Georgetown has a mix of commercial and service industries concentrated in their village center and along routes 133 and 97. This area represents a strong village center and offers opportunity for commercial growth. However with less than 1.5% of the Town's land devoted to commercial and industrial use it remains primarily a residential community. The town's small industrial ventures are in the manufacturing sector and typically employ less than 150 persons.

An economic offshoot of the town's historical richness is the steady growth of the antique business. Over fifty antique stores are present in the central business district and outlying areas. (Open Space Plan, 1989)

Recognizing the need to grow and attract professionalism, the Town planned for a Conservation Agent and Town Planner in 1999. (Town Report) The Planner's principal efforts to this point have been to assist the planning board in establishing a framework that balances preservation and growth. A Town Master Plan committee is also working on changes to the town's zoning that will support the town's vision. In addition the Master Plan committee is considering hiring a consultant that will help them define the "downtown core" as they see this as an asset that needs to be both preserved and capitalized on. (Colwell)

Labor Force

1990 Average Time to Work: 25.9 minutes (1990 US Census)
 1998 Labor Force: 4,035 Employment (1998 DET)
 1998 Unemployment Rate: 2.7%, State Average 3.3% (1999 DET)
 1997 Wages: \$61,454,487 (DET)
 Number of Establishments 154

<u># of Persons</u>	<u>Type of Establishment</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
<u>Employed</u>		
confidential	Agriculture	%
370	Government	18.6%
291	Construction	14.7%
460	Manufacturing	23.2%
20	TCTU (Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities)	1.0%
446	Trade	22.5%
52	FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate)	2.6%
346	Services	17.4%
Total:		100.0%

Largest Employers

1. Town of Georgetown	430	(1993 DHCD)
2. United Foam Plastics	114	(1993 DHCD)
3. Baldpate Hospital	110	(1993 DHCD)
4. B&W Press	110	(1993 DHCD)
5. BME Engineering	100	(1993 DHCD)

1990 Income (US Census)

Per Capita Income:	\$17,571, State Rank 131
Median Household Income:	\$44,861, State Rank 109

FY 99 Tax Levy and Assessed Value (1999 DOR)

<u>Tax Classification</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>Tax Levy</u>	<u>Assessed Value</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
Residential	\$15.03	\$6,835,719	\$454,805,000	88.6%
Open Space	\$	\$	\$	0.0%
Commercial	\$15.03	\$ 375,543	\$ 24,986,200	4.9%
Industrial	\$15.03	\$ 365,863	\$ 24,342,200	4.7%
Personal Property	\$15.03	\$ 142,237	\$ 9,463,508	1.8%
Total:		\$7,719,362	\$513,596,908	100.0%

Education (DOE)

Educational Attainment:	87.4% High School Graduate or Higher (1990 US Census)	
	28.1% Bachelor's Degree or Higher (1990 US Census)	
Georgetown Public Schools	Georgetown	
Elementary	Perley Elementary K-2	
Jr.-Sr- High	Penn Brook 3-6	
Other (Public) High Schools:	Georgetown Jr.-Sr. High School 7-12	
12	Whittier Regional Vocational High School, grades 9-12	
14	Essex Agricultural and Technical Institute, grades 9-14	
Statistic for Grades 9-12:	<u>District Average</u>	<u>State Average</u>
Number Students per Teacher (1996-7)	17.0	18.0
Percent Planning 4-year College (1996-7)	65.5%	53.4%
SAT Scores - Verbal (1998)	497	502
- Math (1998)	507	502
- Participation Rate (1998)	77%	67%
Drop-Out Rate (1994-5)	3.2%	3.4%
Colleges:	None	

Metropolitan Statistical Area: Lawrence
Hospitals: Baldpate Hospital

Housing

Most of the housing in Georgetown has developed since the 1940, with less than 20% built earlier. While a great variety exists within the established neighborhoods the typical new construction consists of 3 to 4 bedroom homes with a \$300,000 pricetag. Increasingly these are in large subdivisions.

Number of Housing Units:	2,219 (1990 US Census and MVPC Data)
Owner versus Rental-Occupied:	82.7% vs. 17.3% (1990 US Census)
Subsidized Housing Inventory:	136 or 6.14% of all units in Town (1993 DHCD).
Public Housing Units:	136 Conventional State (1997 Community)
Rental Assistance:	1 State (MVRP), Federal (Section 8) 2 (1993-94 DHCD)
1999 Tax Rate:	\$15.03 (1999 DOR) – 1998 State average \$16.96 (DOR)
1999 Avrg. Single-Family Tax Bill:	\$2,896 (1999 DOR)
1998 Median Sales Price:	(1999 Banker & Tradesman)
- Single-Family	\$230,000
- Condominium	n/a
Jan-April 1999 Median Sales Price:	(1999 Banker & Tradesman)
- Single-Family	\$210,000
- Condominium	n/a
Zoning:	15,000 sq.ft. minimum lot area (DHCD)

Transportation

Georgetown enjoys a transportation network that easily connects residents to Boston and greater New England.

Miles of Roadway:	60.15 (1999, MVPC)
Principle Highways:	Interstate 95 provides Georgetown with excellent access to Boston, Route 128, New Hampshire and Maine, Route 133 provides east/west access linking to Route 1A in Rowley and Route 97 provides access to other area communiites and ultimately Salem, NH
Rail Service:	Available since October 1998 from the neighboring Rowley
Bus Service:	The Georgetown Council on Aging provides paratransit services for the elderly and disabled. Coach Company provides service to Boston twice daily.
Air Service:	The Lawrence Municipal Airport located in North Andover is the closest facility. Logan Airport is approximately 35 miles to the south and Manchester, NH Airport is approx. 30 miles to the north.

Natural Resources

Georgetown has a diversity of landforms and ecosystems. While the majority of the town's land is forestland reclaimed from abandoned agricultural fields, wetlands and waterbodies are well represented as well. Parker River, Rock Pond and Pentucket Pond being the most notable. Baldpate Hill and Littles Hills are prominent hills that characterize the southern part of town.(Open Space Plan) Together these resources provide Georgetown with numerous recreation opportunities as well as its rural image.

Rivers and Streams:	Parker River, Lufkins Brook, Penn Brook, Wheeler Brook, Jackman Brook, Muddy Brook
Water Supply:	Georgetown Municipal Water Department serves nearly all the homes in Georgetown from ground water supplies.
Sewer:	Private
Lakes, Ponds:	Rock Pond, Rock Pond
Watersheds:	Merrimack River, Parker River

Cultural and Historic Resources

Libraries:	Peabody Public Library
Historic Commission:	Assists in designating historic buildings and sites
Historic Sites:	Schoolhouse #3 Numerous historic homes throughout the community
Churches:	Latter Day Saints, Congregational, Baptist, Roman Catholic
Newspaper:	Georgetown Record is a weekly newspaper.

Open Space and Recreation

It was not until the 1960's that the Town of Georgetown began to actively seek open space properties. Since then, hundreds of acres of forest, wetlands, meadows, and waterways have been acquired for public purposes. (Open Space Plan, 1989) Some of the most notable include:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Site/Facilities</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Georgetown	Lufkins Brook Conservation Area, wooded and wetland refuge. Multi-purpose conservation and outdoor recreation area and the community gardens.	192
Commonwealth	Georgetown/Rowley State Forest encompasses a large area of land in Georgetown, Rowley, and Boxford. In Georgetown the parcel is wooded wetlands and uplands. It offers a variety of trails for horseback riding, hiking, nature study and cross-country skiing. Hunting and camping are permitted on a limited basis.	514
Georgetown	Pentucket Pond offers opportunities for swimming, water skiing, Boating and fishing.	86
Georgetown	American Legion Park is located at the end of Pentucket Pond, has two tennis court, a little league baseball diamond, beach, playground and picnic areas.	3
Georgetown	Rock Pond is used mainly by the local population for water-based sports. There is a public boat launch off Route 97.	57
Essex County Greenbelt Assoc	Baldpate Hill consists of two parcels including the highest point in Georgetown with a lookout tower at the summit. It is used for various passive recreational activities.	30
Commonwealth	Crane Pond Area was originally part of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. Hunting and camping are available on a limited basis.	320
Georgetown	Camp Denison is a newly acquired property that is enjoying great Community involvement in its maintenance and development. It Enjoys frontage along Baldpate Pond and an overlook and picnic Area.	

Other Town-Supported Services

Council on Aging:	Provides Transportation and programs.
Fire:	Georgetown Fire Department
Police:	Georgetown Police Department
Solid Waste:	Transfer station. Residents pay per unit weight
Cemeteries:	3 (31.2 acres) (Open Space Plan 1989)

Public Safety (Massachusetts State Police, Crime Reporting Unit)

	1996	1997
Total Crimes Reported	61	80
Violent Crimes	5	17
Property Crimes	56	63

Land Use (MVPC, 1991 MassGIS)

<u>Land Use Classification</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
Cropland	265	3.25%
Pasture	96	1.14%
Forest	4,946	58.8%
Wetland	456	5.42%
Mining	45	0.53%
Open Land	154	1.83%
Recreation (Participation)	5	0.06%
Recreation (Spectator)	14	0.17%
Water based recreation	3	...0.04%
Residential Multi-Family	10	...0.12%
Residential (< 1/4-acre lots)	0	0.00%
Residential (1/4 to 1/2 acre lots)	1,266	15.05%
Salt Wetlands	0	0.00%
Commercial	100	1.19%
Industrial	22	0.26%
Urban Open (Parks, Cemeteries)	09	2.48%
Transportation	171	2.03%
Waste Disposal (landfill & sewage)	17	0.20%
Water	118	1.40%

Woody Perennial	<u>14</u>	<u>0.17%</u>
Total:	8,412	100.00%

Contacts included:

Kathleen Bradley Colwell, Town of Georgetown Town Planner, Interview 6/9/99 (978) 352-5713
 Janice McGrane, Town Clerk, Telephone Interview, 6/24/99 (978) 352-5711
 Sylvia Palandro, Administrative Assistant, Telephone Interview 6/24/1999, (978) 352-5755

Document Resources included:

Georgetown Community Profile (DHCD)
 Department of Revenue (At a Glance Report for Georgetown, 1999)
 Department of Employment and Training
 Department of Education, Georgetown Public School District Profile, 1997-1998
 Town Stats by Banker & Tradesman
 Massachusetts State Police, Crime Reporting Unit
 MVPC, MassGIS 1991 Land Use Classifications
 Town of Georgetown Open Space and Recreation Plan 1989
 Merrimack Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 1998
 Town of Georgetown 1998 Annual Report